

***Hazel Green* by Odo Hirsch**

Hazel Green is a very headstrong and determined young girl. She lives in the Moodey Building, the historical apartment building previously home to Mr. Frogg, a former mayor. The most important day in the city every year is the Frogg Day parade, in which children have no place.

Hazel decides to change this and works on putting together a float to go in the parade with other children. Along the way we discover the various tradespeople in the town – the two feuding bakers, whom Hazel is caught up in the middle of.

Mr Volio, her favourite baker, invents the “chocolate dipper” and Hazel is sworn to secrecy until its unveiling on Frogg Day, but the opposing Baker, Mr Murray, discovers the new delicacy and releases his own version within days. Poor Hazel is accused of telling Mr Murray about the new treat and Hazel is dismayed when Mr Volio will not believe her.

We hear about Mrs Gluck, the florist, Mr Winkel, the Head of the Organising Committee for the Frogg Day parade who believes children create trouble and have no place in the parade, and Mr McCullouch, the hairdresser who backs Hazel.

Hazel and her friends have to come up with a plan to convince Mr Winkel that their float will work and that children have a place in the parade. A lonely, mathematical genius child called Yak, who lives in the apartment building, tells Hazel that their float will fail and fall over - no-one but Hazel believes him. Hazel tries to convince them all, but is ostracised by her friends and Mr Volio who refuse to march in the parade if Hazel marches. Will Hazel get to march with her float and will Mr Volio believe her in the end? Will Yak participate and be accepted by everyone?

A fantastic tale of fierce independence – I loved the community spirit within the book! Highly recommended to Year 4 students and above!

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